IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the following two paragraphs as shown.

The last paragraph on page 1.

With the advent of the Internet, ~~retails~~ retail stores have created an online presence that enables customers to review items being sold by the stores, as well as to purchase items from those stores. In addition to reviewing and purchasing items, a customer may also purchase a certificate that may be redeemed at the retail store. In contrast to the face to face purchase of the certificate, the purchase of the certificate over the Internet does not have the same integrity or accuracy, making it more difficult to verify the integrity of the certificate when a customer attempts to redeem it. Accordingly, it would be useful to have a system for effectively verifying the redemption of online-purchased certificates.

The last paragraph on page 5.

The IVR 22 transmits the merchant ID to the certificate system 10 for verification (step 44). The certificate system 10 validates the merchant ID, and the IVR 22 receives the result of the validation from the certificate system (step 46). The result may be in the form of a one-character flag, such as an S (safe) or an F (fail). The certificate system 10 can ~~validates~~ validate the merchant ID by, for example, matching the merchant ID against the database maintained by the certificate system 10.

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